

Week of Sept 9-15

## WORKOUT

**Scripture Reading:** Read Philippians chapter 2

Doctors recommend regular physical exercise if we are to live long and healthy lives. Such exercise ought to include some kind of routine that will get the heart pumping and the lungs working. Running, jogging, walking, swimming and biking are some of the main ways to accomplish these goals. A cardiovascular workout is essential to keep the circulatory system in good condition. It's also beneficial to do some strengthening exercises, like weightlifting, that help to build muscle and maintain tone. Finally, it's good to include some flexibility exercises to keep everything limber. This can reduce injury. Regular workouts that include these components go a long way to keeping us healthy and allowing us to glorify God with our bodies.

In today's chapter reading, Paul mentions another workout that we should include on a daily basis: "...*continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*" We are to "work out" our salvation. Work out? What does that mean? Isn't salvation a gift from God? How can we work that out?

Paul isn't talking about earning salvation here. Rather, his point is that he expects a believer to take the truths of the Christian faith and work them out in their daily life. In other words, Paul anticipates that we will apply what we hear from God's Word to what we think, how we speak, and the way we live. This isn't much different from what James writes in his epistle when he tells us not to deceive ourselves by simply hearing the Word but not acting on it. We are to be doers of the Word (James 1:22). And, our working out is to be done with fear and trembling...not an abject fear but out of reverence for a holy God who calls us to be holy because He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16) and who works in us both to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Furthermore, because Paul is mentioning this command in the context of community and the need to live in unity (2:1-11), the working out isn't just an individual thing. It's also a corporate, body of Christ issue. I can't be content to work out my salvation in isolation from other believers. No, it has to work out in a group setting.

In the physical realm, failure to regularly work out leads to some very flabby bodies and probable health issues. In the spiritual realm, it's the same thing. When we don't work out our salvation, we find a very flabby body of Christ and a lack of spiritual health. Let's hit the gym today, shall we? It's time to work out our salvation.

**Action Step:** Have you been getting regular spiritual workouts in as you seek to apply God's truths in your life? Are there areas that have grown soft and out of shape from a lack of exercise: your speech, your thoughts, your time, your actions, etc.? It's time to go to God's Gym and work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

**Prayer Focus:** For the Lord to show you where you are "flabby" and in need of a spiritual "work out" of biblical principles in your life. For you to learn to listen to and depend on your coach who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

**Take-a-way:** *Both our body and the body of Christ need regular workouts!*